

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended): ~~A synthetic~~ An oligonucleotide complementary to a portion of the 5' untranslated region of hepatitis C virus and having a nucleotide sequence consisting essentially of SEQ ID NO: 28.

Claim 2. (Currently Amended): ~~A synthetic~~ An oligonucleotide comprising a sequence complementary to at least two non-contiguous regions of an HCV messenger or genomic RNA, wherein one of the at least two non-contiguous regions is ~~complementary to~~ a 5' untranslated region of the HCV messenger or genomic RNA, and wherein one of the at least two non-contiguous regions is ~~complementary to a region selected from the group consisting of a 5'~~ untranslated region of the HCV messenger or genomic RNA, ~~[[and]] or~~ a region within +1 to +48 of the HCV messenger or genomic RNA.

Claim 3. (Original): An oligonucleotide according to claim 2, wherein the sequence is complementary to three non-contiguous regions.

Claim 4. (Currently Amended): ~~A synthetic~~ An oligonucleotide according to claim 2, wherein one of the non-contiguous regions is a 5' untranslated region.

Claim 5. (Currently Amended): ~~A synthetic~~ An oligonucleotide according to claim 3, wherein one of the non-contiguous regions is a 5' untranslated region.

Claim 6. (Original): An oligonucleotide according to claim 2 having about 18 to about 24 nucleotides.

Claim 7. (Withdrawn): An oligonucleotide according to claim 2, wherein ~~one portion of the oligonucleotide the sequence complementary to one of the at least two non-contiguous regions of an HCV messenger or genomic RNA~~ has the sequence GGGGUCCUGGAG (SEQ ID NO:47) or has the sequence CAACACUACUCG (SEQ ID NO:80).

Claim 8. (Currently Amended): ~~A synthetic~~ An oligonucleotide according to claims 1 or 2 which is modified.

Claim 9. (Canceled)

Claim 10. (Currently Amended): An oligonucleotide according to claim [[9]] 47, comprising at least one phosphorothioate internucleotide linkage.

Claim 11. (Currently Amended): An oligonucleotide according to claim [[9]] 47, wherein the internucleotide linkages in the oligonucleotide are phosphorothioate internucleotide linkages.

Claim 12. (Original): An oligonucleotide according to claim 8 which comprises at least one deoxyribonucleotide.

Claim 13. (Original): An oligonucleotide according to claim 8 which comprises at least one ribonucleotide.

Claim 14. (Canceled)

Claim 15. (Currently Amended): An oligonucleotide according to claim [[14]] 48, wherein an oligodeoxyribonucleotide region is interposed between two oligoribonucleotide regions, or the inverted configuration thereof.

Claim 16. (Original): An oligonucleotide according to claim 13, wherein the ribonucleotide is a 2'-O-methyl ribonucleotide.

Claim 17. (Currently Amended): An oligonucleotide according to claim [[14]] 48, wherein the ribonucleotide is a 2'-O-methyl ribonucleotide.

Claim 18. (Previously Presented): An oligonucleotide according to claim 15, wherein the ribonucleotide is a 2'-O-methyl ribonucleotide.

Claim 19. (Currently Amended): An oligonucleotide according to claim [[14]] 48, which comprises at least one 2'-O-methyl ribonucleotide at the 3'-end of the oligonucleotide.

Claim 20. (Original): An oligonucleotide according to claim 19 which further comprises at least one 2'-O-methyl ribonucleotide at the 5'-end of the oligonucleotide.

Claim 21. (Previously Presented): An oligonucleotide having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:119-130, wherein the oligonucleotide is modified, and wherein the oligonucleotide comprises at least one deoxyribonucleotide and at least one ribonucleotide.

Claim 22. (Previously Presented): An oligonucleotide according to claim 2 comprising SEQ ID NO:38.

Claim 23. (Withdrawn): An oligonucleotide according to claim 2 comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146 and 147.

Claim 24. (Withdrawn): An oligonucleotide according to claim 3 comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, and 158.

Claim 25. (Previously Presented): An oligonucleotide according to claim 8 which oligonucleotide is self-stabilized by a loop.

Claim 26. (Withdrawn): An oligonucleotide according to claim 24 having a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:131, 132, and 133.

Claim 27. (Previously Presented): An oligonucleotide according to claim 8, wherein the modification is selected from the group consisting of a nicked dumbbell, a closed dumbbell, 2', 3' and/or 5' caps, additions to a molecule at the internucleotide phosphate linkage, oxidation, oxidation/reduction, and oxidative/reductive amination, and combinations thereof.

Claim 28. (Original): An oligonucleotide according to claim 8, wherein at least one nucleoside is substituted by inosine or wherein at least one deoxycytosine is substituted by 5-methyl deoxycytosine.

Claim 29. (Withdrawn): An oligonucleotide according to claim 28, having the nucleotide sequence SEQ ID NO:118 (HCV-245).

Claim 30. (Previously Presented): An oligonucleotide according to claim 8, wherein the oligonucleotide is modified by incorporating at least one triplex-forming sequence selected from the group consisting of 3'GGGGG5', 3'CCCCC5', 3'CCCCCCCUCCC5', and 3'CCUCCC5'.

Claim 31. (Withdrawn): An oligonucleotide according to claim 30 having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171 and 172.

Claims 32-41. (Canceled)

Claim 42. (Previously Presented): A pharmaceutical composition comprising SEQ ID NOS: 28 and 68 in a pharmacologically acceptable carrier.

Claim 43. (Previously Presented): A pharmaceutical composition comprising at least a first synthetic oligonucleotide according to claim 2 and a second synthetic oligonucleotide according to claim 2 in a pharmacologically acceptable carrier, wherein the first synthetic oligonucleotide and the second oligonucleotide are complementary to different non-contiguous regions of HCV.

Claim 44. (Currently Amended): A pharmaceutical composition comprising an oligonucleotide sequence of claim 1, at least one oligonucleotide ~~according to claim 1~~ having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 31, 33, 36, 37, 47, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132 and a combination thereof, and a pharmacologically acceptable carrier.

Claim 45. (Previously Presented): A pharmaceutical composition comprising at least one oligonucleotide according to claim 2 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 46. (Withdrawn): A synthetic oligonucleotide having the nucleotide sequence SEQ ID NO: 117 (HCV-242, HCV-243, HCV-244).

Claim 47. (New): An oligonucleotide according to claim 8, wherein the modification comprises at least one internucleotide linkage selected from the group consisting of alkylphosphonate, phosphorothioate, phosphorodithioate, alkylphosphonothioate, phosphoramidate, carbamate, carbonate, phosphate triester, acetamide, carboxymethyl ester, and combinations thereof.

Claim 48. (New): An oligonucleotide according to claim 12, which additionally comprises at least one ribonucleotide.

Claim 49. (New): An oligonucleotide having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, and combinations thereof.

Claim 50. (New): A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, an oligonucleotide sequence of claim 1, and at least one oligonucleotide having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 38-67, SEQ ID NOS: 134-172, and combinations thereof.

Claim 51. (New): A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and an oligonucleotide comprising a sequence recited in SEQ ID NO:38.

Claim 52. (New): A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and an oligonucleotide sequence of claim 1.